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June 6, 1892.

DR. G. S. HALL:

DEAR SIR:—I will gladly do my best to give you some account of the philosophical work at this university. The time, however, is not very propitious, for we stand in Scotland just now between the old and the new. The Universities' Commission, now sitting, has just framed ordinances (which come into operation next session), under which greater latitude is allowed to the ordinary student, i. e., the way of choosing his curriculum, and at the same time greater opportunity is offered for specializing in honours courses. We hope that this may lead to a considerable increase in the number of honours students, and a corresponding advance in the amount and the standard of higher teaching in the different departments. It will be necessary to this end that the university staff of teachers be increased; and from the increased funds at the disposal of the Commissioners we look for an improvement in this respect also. In philosophy, for example, the Faculty of Arts here has asked for a lecturer in physiological experimental psychology, and a lecturer on ancient philosophy.

These things, however, are still in the future, and I can only speak of the past. There are only two official teachers of philosophy in the university, the professor of logic and metaphysics and the professor of moral philosophy; though we have also a professor of political economy, a professor of the theory, history and art of education, and a professor of public law, all included in the philosophical department of the future. The lectures of the professor of education (Professor Laurie) at present embraces a large amount of psychological training, and the theological lectures of Professor Flint often diverge into philosophy; and these well-known names could not be omitted in any estimate of the philosophical work of the university. Philosophical teaching in the stricter sense, however, devolves entirely, as I have said, upon Professor Calderwood and myself. Every Scottish M. A. has hitherto been obliged to include "logic and metaphysics" and "moral philosophy" in his curriculum, and hence the energies of a Scottish professor have to be mainly devoted to the elementary training of the large masses of students which, in a university like this, pass annually through his hands. This leaves less time than is desirable for the development of honours teaching.

The ordinary course in "logic and metaphysics" embraces the elements of logic and empirical psychology, together with an introduction to the problems of epistemology and metaphysics, such as may be gained from a study of English philosophy in Locke, Berkeley and Hume. The character of Professor Calderwood's course in moral philosophy may be best gathered from his much-used "Handbook" of the subject. In connection with both chairs there has existed, for many years now, an advanced class for honours students. In "logic and metaphysics" this has been devoted hitherto entirely to metaphysics and the theory of knowledge in connection with the history of philosophic thought, especially of the Kantian and post-Kantian era. The corresponding class in "moral philosophy" embraces a survey, historical and critical, of ancient and modern ethics. Finally, it would be wrong not to mention that to each of the chairs is assigned a class assistant, who, in addition to assisting with the paper-drudgery of examinations and essays, gives a certain number of lectures, both to the ordinary and the Honours class. These assistantships are held by distinguished graduates, generally for a period of three years, and have formed in many cases the training-ground of future professors. It is our object by more adequate endowment of these positions, as well as by the institution of lectureships, to increase the range of philosophical teaching in the university, and so keep pace with the increasing demands of specialism within our subject.

Believe me, yours very faithfully,

ANDREW SETH.